



## CUBA CULTURAL TOUR 2020

### ITINERARY

**Day 1. Arrive Havana.** Check in at local “casa particular,” a private enterprise guest house.

#### **Habana Vieja – UNESCO World Heritage Site**



- Breakfast every day at the casa (included).
- Experience the unique history, music, art and architecture of Old Havana.
- Explore “Cuban Daily Life Today.” Visit food markets and shops.
- Lunch at a “paladar” in Old Havana (included).
- Meet with artists at their workshops in Old Havana.
- Shop for dinner at a local agro-mercado.
- Help prepare a typical Cuban dinner (included) with an expert cook.

## Day 2. Eastern Havana neighborhoods and beyond



- Visit Havana's most interesting neighborhoods.
- Lunch at a typical Cuban paladar (included).
- Historic Hotel Nacional.
- Explore Havana's rooftop culture.
- Cuban history and architecture walk.
- Tour Havana in a classic American car.
- El Malecon photo opportunity.
- Evening at the F.A.C., Cuban Art Factory, a performance and exhibition venue for Cuban artists.



### Day 3. Journey to Viñales, UNESCO World Heritage Site



- Visit to senior citizen center to donate clothing or supplies and meet with the residents.
- Travel 3 hours through the Cuban countryside to the province of Viñales.
- Visit to Los Jazmines overlook to view the spectacular valleys.
- Check in to local casa particular.
- Lunch (included) at a farm-to-table paladar with locally produced cuisine.
- Tobacco plantation. Educational opportunity to meet with farmers and understand the tobacco growing process.
- Explore the town of Viñales, visit local craftspeople and music venues
- Dinner on your own at any of the local paladars.

#### Day 4. Valley of Viñales and return to Havana



- Visit to underground river and caves.
- Lunch at a local paladar (included).
- Return to Havana.
- Farewell dinner (included).

#### Day 5. Return to the United States

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# **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS REGARDING YOUR VISIT TO CUBA**

## **Preparing for travel**

If you are a U.S. citizen, when you purchase your airline ticket the airline will provide you with a form for you to check one of 12 reasons for your travel to Cuba. Check “Support for the Cuban People” as this trip is consistent with that section of U.S. Department of State and Treasury general license regulations for U.S. citizen travel to Cuba. The trip will be an opportunity for learning and interaction with the Cuban people. You will also have an outrageous amount of fun and take outstanding photos.

## **What to bring**

- Valid passport
- Travel card

If you are a U.S. citizen born outside of Cuba,\* you can purchase your travel card for Cuba at the counter of the airline you are flying with. The price of a travel card from Delta, Southwest, Jet Blue and United is \$50.

American Airlines sells travel cards through their associate, Cuba Travel Services. <https://cubavisaservices.com/product/aa-visa-card/> \$85 online and \$100 at the airport counter.

Citizens of countries other than the U.S. need to check entry requirements as they normally would to any country.

- If your credit card is issued on a U.S. bank, you must bring cash. Credit cards issued on U.S. banks won't work in Cuba. You must bring enough cash to last the length of your trip. If your accommodations, all breakfasts and some meals are already paid for, factor that in when you decide how much cash to bring.
- Note there is a 10% penalty in Cuba for exchanging U.S. dollars. That is in addition to the 3% currency exchange fee. If you exchange US\$1 into local convertible currency or CUCs, you will only receive the equivalent of 87 cents. Other currencies do not have this penalty. For this reason, it may make more sense for you to convert your US\$ into another currency first, like Euros, and then convert those into local CUCs in Cuba. The two currency exchange fees; US\$ to Euros to CUCs may be lower than the exchange fee plus the penalty on US\$. If you are not bringing much cash, the small exchange savings may not be worth the trouble.

## **Additional travel requirements**

Travel insurance during your trip to Cuba is included in the price of your airline ticket.

### **\*For Cuban-born travelers**

If you were born in Cuba, you will need a special visa which takes about 5 to 6 weeks to process and for you to receive. I have used the services of Take Me Away Travel Agency in Miami, Florida, phone 786 483 8663 and they have been reliable and efficient. However, any agency that offers flights to Cuba can provide this service.

## **What to pack for Cuba**

- Wide-brim hat.
- Sunglasses.
- Loose breathable material: T-shirts, shorts, sundress.
- Products not readily available in Cuba. These include: Sunscreen, feminine hygiene products, toiletries.
- Cuba is extremely informal. You should try to dress down.

You will visit charities and may want to bring donations. These include:

- Used clothing.
- School supplies such as pens, pencils, notebooks, crayons.
- Soap, aspirin, toiletries, batteries, plastic containers.

Average round-trip airline tickets to Havana, from NYC with advance purchase is \$300; from Miami \$200.

## **What's included**

Private guide throughout.

Airport transfers.

"Casa particular" accommodation.

All breakfasts, most other meals.

Transportation outside Havana (most of Havana is walkable).

Entrance fees to venues on the schedule.

## **What's not included**

Anything not mentioned in the itinerary above.